

## SETTLEMENTS, VILLAGES & TOWNS

As reflected in Chapter Seven of the Comprehensive Plan, Fauquier has over 40 villages and settlements in addition to its 9 service districts with Bealeton, Catlett, Calverton, Marshall, Midland, New Baltimore, Opal, Remington, and Warrenton as their central communities. It needs to be noted that the incorporated Towns of Remington, The Plains and Warrenton plan and regulate development within their corporate limits and work with the County in adjacent areas.

Fauquier County and other jurisdictions throughout Virginia possess a variety of long established communities, each of which, are molded by geography, history and the environment unique to their specific locations. However, all share certain essential features. For example, initially the more rural hamlet and village settlements supported rural farming with labor, and basic commercial and educational services. The numbers of people involved in this support activity were not large, which thus limited settlement size and spatial frequency.

Close study of traditional settlements and villages in Fauquier County reveals a second common design feature. These settlements invariably seek to "contain" their segment of road by means of slight curves, the artful placement of buildings, overhead tree canopy and, in some cases, the construction of stone walls to limit views. Not surprisingly, structures in these communities are conveniently located close to the road.

There may also be a psychological reason for the "closure" of views within rural settlements and villages. Whereas a resident in larger towns and urban areas, accustomed to the restricted focus of streets, discovers the open views of a park with welcome relief, in the country the psychological need is reversed. If wide ranging views are a workaday norm, then the closure of view within the settlement or village offers a kind of psychological refuge from farming or work in the open fields and other associated agricultural activities. Of course such design closure is never total and the rear windows and back gardens of homes in a settlement will still face open country.

The settlements and villages of Fauquier County continue that traditional design form which allows neighbors both space and the ability to walk and visit within their neighborhoods. Residents want to preserve the unique characteristics of their locale and to build upon the existing historical pattern. Fauquier County intends to continue its historical, traditional patterned, mixed use community development "updated" to accommodate the automobile.

In this effort, Fauquier communities differ markedly from contemporary suburban development elsewhere. Suburban development is characterized by a evident lack of place. A typical cul-de-sac built in 2001 might be located anywhere in the Washington, D.C. area. Furthermore, conventional suburban development patterns cannot compare with the visual coherence or efficiency of traditional community patterns.

For example, a person without access to a car cannot easily live in the suburbs. As each development is fenced off from its neighbors, from commercial and employment uses, even the most mundane errands require a motor vehicle. As urban development spreads nationwide and in northern Virginia, studies continue to demonstrate that percentage increases in vehicle miles traveled by residents outpaces population growth approximately 6 to 1.

## **VILLAGE SERVICE DISTRICTS**

**Service Districts** are well defined within Chapter Six of the Comprehensive plan. Suffice it to say that service districts are the designated growth areas planned for the most intense development in terms of use and density. To plan and support modest growth in this district designation, adequate public facilities and infrastructure, including library services, schools, public water and sewer are critical ingredients. Service Districts can include residential communities exceeding 2,500+ residents and a mix of commercial, industrial and employment land use activities. Bealeton, Marshall, New Baltimore, Opal, Remington and Warrenton are included as Service Districts.

With the planning for Catlett, Calverton and Midland, another category has emerged and been defined. That category is the **Village Service District**. This designation is for a smaller scaled community, which may need public sewer and/or water, and may share other basic public infrastructure and services with adjoining communities, such as schools, fire and rescue, library and parks. Public infrastructure and service investments for these individual districts will restrict and are not intended to support the population densities and business communities envisioned for the Service District classification. Village Service Districts may have a population up to approximately 2500.